

# WWT/JNCC/SNH Goose & Swan Monitoring Programme

## survey results 2006/07

### East Canadian High Arctic Light-bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla hrota*

#### 1. Abundance

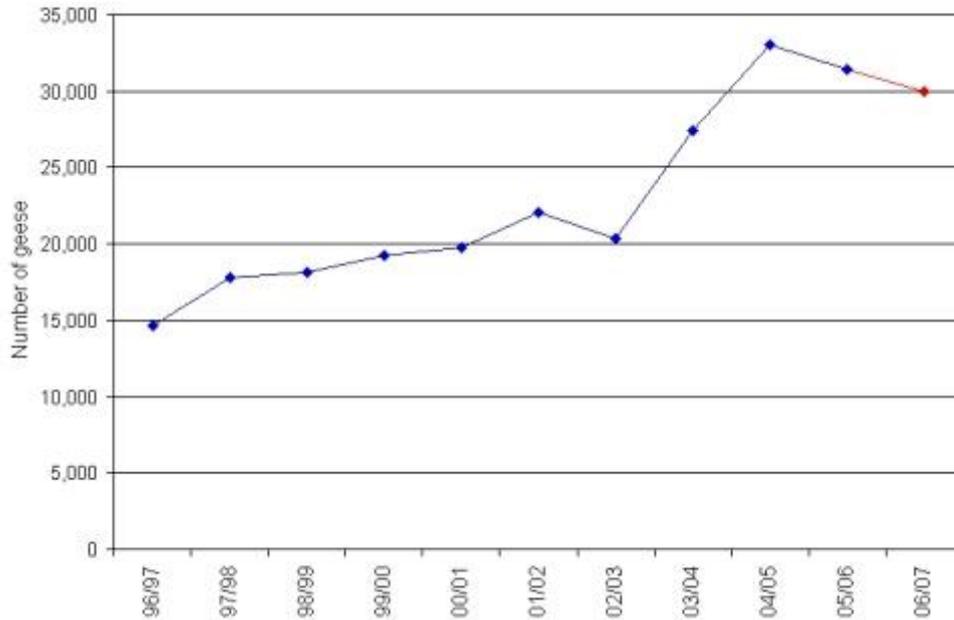
For the fifth consecutive year, comprehensive coverage of sites in Iceland, Ireland, and the UK that support this population was undertaken in October. The census date was 15/16 October and all key sites were covered within several days of this date - Irish sites from the ground and Icelandic sites from a combination of ground and aerial survey.

Results were received from 14 sites in Ireland, as well as those in Iceland. A total of 23,200 was counted on 14 October at Strangford Lough; other significant concentrations were at Lough Foyle (1,778) and Tralee Bay/Castlemaine Harbour (482). In Iceland, 3,269 birds were counted on 15 October, and follow-up checking of sites from the air on the 17th confirmed that no concentrations were missed. With some data awaited, the total minimum number of birds counted was 28,940. With predicted numbers at sites where data remain outstanding it is likely that the population total was similar to the previous year at just over 30,000 individuals.

Another census was also undertaken at key sites in Ireland and Iceland in mid-September. A total of 27,000 individuals was counted, 25,000 of which were in two main concentrations in western Iceland and just 2,000 in Ireland. At this time, however, it is likely that numbers of birds were still on passage from Canada via Greenland. The peak count at Strangford Lough in autumn 2006/07 was 25,236 individuals on 27 October, approximately 84% of the total population.

Numbers and percentage of young of East Canadian High Arctic Light-bellied Geese recorded during the 2006/07 International Light-bellied Brent Goose Census in October 2006.

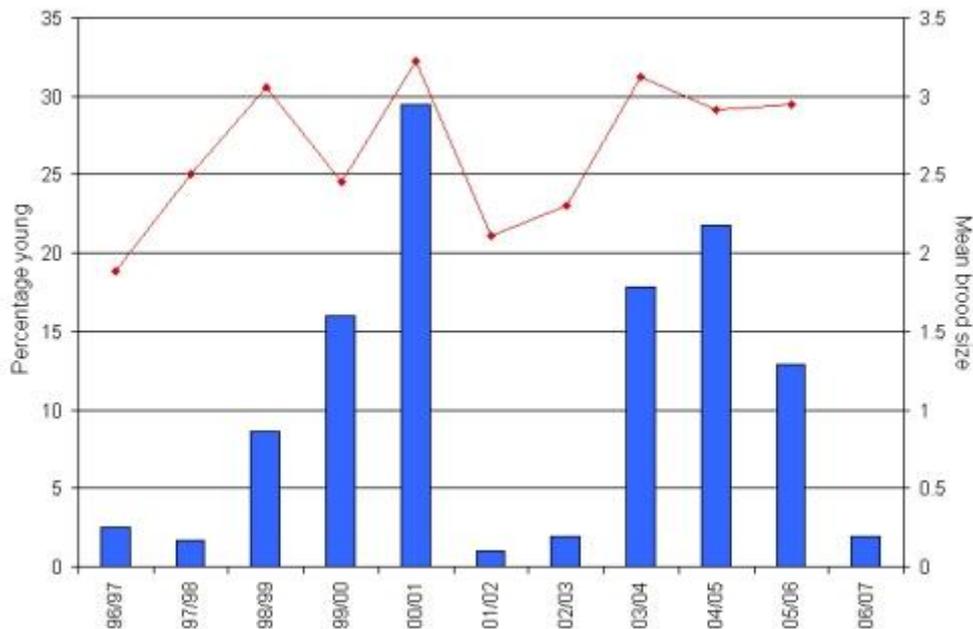
Site	Date	Count	% young
West Iceland	15 Oct	3,269	-
Lough Foyle	16 Oct	1,778	3.1
Belfast Lough		0	-
Strangford Lough	14 Oct	23,200	1.8
Dundrum Bay	16 Oct	0	-
Killough Harbour	16 Oct	0	-
Dublin Bay	14 Oct	211	-
Co. Cork		0	-
Tralee Bay/Castlemaine Harbour		482	-
Shannon & Fergus Estuary		0	-
Inner Galway Bay		0	-
Blacksod Bay		0	-
Killala Bay		0	-
Co. Donegal		0	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>28,940</b>	<b>1.96</b>



Population estimates of East Canadian High Arctic Light-bellied Brent Goose, 1996/97 to 2006/07. The provisional 2006/07 estimate is shown in red. Note: pre-2002/03 counts did not include counts in Iceland and therefore may have underestimated the total population size.

## 2. Breeding success

A total of 12,820 birds was aged at Strangford Lough and Lough Foyle, Ireland, during the international census in mid-October. This yielded a percentage of 1.96% juveniles. An aged sample of 6,657 was also made in Iceland in September that yielded an estimate of 1.09% young.



The mean percentage of young (columns) and mean brood size (dots) of East Canadian High Arctic Light-bellied Brent Geese, 1996/97 to 2006/07. Note: no brood size data are available for 2006/07.

### 3. Discussion

Provisional results from the 2006 International Census of East Canadian High Arctic Light-bellied Brent Geese indicate a small decline since the previous year. However, breeding success was very low during 2006, with <2.0% young in the autumn population, so a small decrease in overall abundance is to be expected. Overall, the trend of this population is currently considered to be stable.

This report should be cited as:

WWT. 2007. *Goose & Swan Monitoring Programme: survey results 2006/07. East Canadian High Arctic Light-bellied Brent Goose* Branta bernicla hrota. WWT/JNCC/SNH, Slimbridge.

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## Goose & Swan Monitoring